(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) what measures Government propose to take to secure the release of Indians being held on frivolous charges in neighbouring countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Our Missions and Posts abroad have standing instructions to immediately take up the matter with the host Governments regarding release of Indians held in prisons abroad.

(e) In case the Government comes to know of the arrests of Indians abroad, the Missions concerned are immediately informed and requested to seek consular access, ascertain the reasons for their detention and seek their release. Similarly, Missions also take up the issue *suo moto* with the host Governments for release and thereafter repatriation of the prisoners.

Group D temporary employees in Passport Offices

†1164. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Group D temporary employees in the Passport Offices in the country, as on date;

(b) whether it is a fact that these employees are working as temporary employees for the last many years;

(c) if so, whether Government propose to take any steps to make these employees permanent;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) there are 394 casual employees working in various Passport Offices as on date;

(b) Yes;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) to (e) as per the recruitment rules these employees can only be regularised against vacant Group D posts in the Central Passport Organisation (CPO). These vacancies, as and when they arise, are filled up by promoting the senior most casual worker in the concerned zone.

Atomic fuel supply by America

†1165. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL
AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether America has given its nod to supply fuel for TarapurAtomic Plant recognizing India as a Nuclear Power;

(b) if so, whether any agreements have been signed between the two countries in this regard; and

(c) if so, the conditions and details of the agreements?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) Following Prime Minister's talks with the US President during his visit to Washington DC. on July 18, 2005, the US President conveyed that he would seek agreement from Congress to adjust US laws and policies, and the United States will work with friends and allies to adjust international regimes to enable full civil nuclear energy cooperation and trade with India, including but no limited to expeditious consideration of fuel supplies for safeguarded nuclear reactors at Tarapur.

(b) and (c) The two leaders agreed to establish a Working Group to undertake on a phased basis in the months ahead the necessary actions to fulfil these commitments.

US envoy's visit to New Delhi

1166. SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL
AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a US special envoy Ms. Sherin Tahir Kheli, tasked with developing Washington's position on UN-reforms including expansion and democratization of the UN Security Council, visited New Delhi in May this year;

(b) if so, what was the US proposal put forth and articulated by Ms. Tahir; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.